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SUBJECT: PAKISTANIS ENTER KUNAR PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN, TO
ESCAPE MILITARY ACTION IN PAKISTAN

1.(SBU) SUMMARY. Pakistanis from the Bajaur area have entered Kunar Province in Afghanistan to escape military action in Pakistan. The reported number moving across the border varies from 1,200-5,000, but actual figures are still to be confirmed. Forward Operating Base Joyce, international organizations, including the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) implementing partners and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and Afghan provincial authorities are monitoring the situation and attempting to assess the number of people affected. The area is remote and largely inaccessible and most Pakistanis remain deep in the valley. END SUMMARY

2.(SBU) With increased military action ongoing in Pakistan along the Afghanistan/Pakistan border, Pakistani families are moving to safety into Shaigal and Dangam Districts in the Bar Sholtan and Lar Sholtan Valleys of Kunar Province. On October 17, a combined team from FOB Joyce met under the direction of the Shaigal District Sub Governor, Mohd Zahir Safi, and went into Sholtan Valley to assess the situation. The refugees estimate that 1,000 families crossed the border and are living with Afghan relatives. A small number came down with the elders to meet with ANSF and coalition members and receive humanitarian assistance (HA) at the ICRC in Bar Sholtan. The team provided limited quantities of blankets, shoes, food, and personal care items. The District Sub Governor asked that HA not be dropped via CDS saying "the powerful will take it all and it will not go to those who need it."

13. (SBU) In an October 19 conversation, Sardar Khan of the Department of Refugees and Repatriation informed us that Afghan provincial authorities assigned an emergency commission to survey the families and determine their needs. The commission includes representatives from the Afghan Red Crescent Society, the Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the Department of Refugees and Repatriation, the Department of Public Health, the district governor, and UNHCR implementing partners. The survey was projected to be completed on October 22, but it is still ongoing because most of the areas are inaccessible due to insecurity. Distribution of non-food items continues through the emergency commission.

14. (U) In the meantime, Task Force Chosin in eastern and northern Kunar has distributed basic foodstuffs, such as rice, beans, oil, blankets, and tents. Task Force Mountain Warrior purchased and delivered medicine for 1,200 people per a request from a private doctor. The ANA and ANP are distributing the HA to put an Afghan face on the distribution. Task Force Chosin reported strong cooperation and leadership by the ANA and ANP in responding to the situation.

15. (U) UNHCR and ICRC note that, in general, displacement across the border into Afghanistan has been temporary. Embassy Kabul Refugee Coordinator and Border Coordinator will continue to monitor the situation through their contacts in

the field and in coordination with Embassy Islamabad.
EIKENBERRY